

Executive Report

Report of Executive Head of Environment

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Parking Business Plan 2015-16

Officer recommendation:

That the Executive agrees:

Strategy

- (1) That a Task Group is established to develop a Parking Strategy which sets a framework for parking operations to support key strategic plans including the Local Plan, Town Centre Master Plan and Local Transport Plan,

Off-street parking

- (2) That we continue to examine the potential to develop Millbrook Car Park and also work with our colleagues in Development to explore ways of changing existing car parks, or developing new ones, based on the "drive to, not through" principle,
- (3) That all interested parties discuss changes to the direction road signage, particularly where this will improve motorists' ability to park in the first convenient car park,
- (4) That, with effect from 1 April 2015:
 - (a) the following tariff adjustments be approved:
 - (i) Farnham Road Multi-Storey Car Park from 7.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Saturday from 90p per hour to £1.00 per hour with a maximum daily charge of £8.
 - (ii) York Road Multi-Storey Car Park from 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Saturday from 90p per hour to £1.00 per hour with a maximum daily charge of £8;
 - (iii) Guildford Park Car Park from £4.50 per day on Monday to Friday to £5.00 per day;

- (iv) Shalford Park Car Park from £2.80 per day on Monday to Friday to £3.20 per day;
- (v) Walnut Tree Close Car Park from £3 per day on Monday to Friday to £3.20 per day.
- (b) the charge for season tickets in York Road and Farnham Road Multi-Storey Car Parks be increased by 5%
- (c) the rental charges for garages managed by the Parking Service be increased by 5%
- (d) the charge for contract parking be increased by 5%
- (5) That, when a garage becomes available, first priority is given to any resident living in Areas A, B, C, D, E, or F of the Controlled Parking Zone.
- (6) That the annual revenue contribution to the Car Park Maintenance Reserve be reduced by £125,000 from April 2015,
- (7) That the lights in Castle, Farnham Road and York Road Car Parks be upgraded to LED lamps, as detailed in the bid attached as Annexe 8 of the Parking Business Plan, and that this be funded from the Car Park Maintenance Reserve,
- (8) That the lift replacement programme proposed in the bid attached as Annexe 9 of the Parking Business Plan, be funded from the Car Park Maintenance Reserve.
- (9) That the car parks detailed in Annexe 10 of the Parking Business Plan be included within the Off-Street Parking Places Order and that the Council undertakes the statutory procedures to amend the order.

Park and Ride

- (10) That the provision of guarding services at Artington and Merrow Park and Ride sites be combined to become a mobile guard between the two sites.
- (11) That Surrey County Council be requested to undertake a public consultation on the proposal to remove the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) from the Park & Ride network for people qualifying based on age and on the introduction of a nominal charge of £1 per return journey for these concessionary pass holders.
- (12) That the uncommitted surplus from on-street parking management in Guildford for 2013-14 of £68,000 and the unspent surplus from on-street parking management in Waverley of £37,750, be put towards the cost of Onslow Park and Ride in 2015-16.
- (13) That officers be authorised to undertake necessary actions to bring about the changes agreed in this report, including making changes to the off-street parking order.

Reasons for Recommendations:

- To improve customer service
- To help motorists find the most appropriate parking facility
- To influence parking behaviour to improve traffic flow
- To encourage greater use of Park and Ride
- To provide funding for the Park and Ride service

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 Appendix 1 to this report presents the Parking Business Plan for 2015-16. For the first time this is a combined report covering off-street car parking, on-street parking and Park and Ride. The parking service operates Guildford Borough Council's Car Parks and manages on-street parking on behalf of Surrey County Council. Guildford Borough and Surrey County Councils jointly provide the park and ride service. The decisions relating to each area of service need to be agreed by the particular committee responsible, but by providing a joint business plan all parties can comment on all areas of the service. This will ensure the services and the policies they follow are co-ordinated.
- 1.2 The Parking Business Plan was presented to the Guildford Local Committee on 26 November and our Customer and Community Scrutiny Committee on 13 January 2015. The Guildford Local Committee agreed all the recommendations marked for its decision. The views of the Customer and Community Scrutiny Committee will be reported to the Executive.
- 1.3 The Parking Business Plan provides detailed information on the service and makes recommendations to create a parking strategy. Its recommendations also seek to improve the efficiency of the service and influence parking behaviour by providing better signage, by increasing some charges and by reviewing the car park positions and design.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The Parking Business Plan seeks to support Guildford's dynamic economy by encouraging the appropriate use of parking space and promoting ways to access the town which reduce congestion. These actions also help enhance a sustainable environment for those who live and work in the town. The service is large in financial terms and seeks to provide value for money by reducing costs and making appropriate charges.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Parking Business Plan attached as Appendix 1 and is divided into sections for easy reference.
- 3.2 Section 3 of the Parking Business Plan highlights the importance of using parking as a strategic intervention to influence vehicle movement in support of other policies. It sets out some clear aims but recommends that a comprehensive parking policy be developed. This action is highlighted as recommendation (I) of

this report and was agreed by the Guildford Local Committee at its meeting on 26 November 2014.

- 3.3 Section 4 discusses on-street parking. The recommendation to the Guildford Local Committee was to agree in principle for us to look at virtual permit technology to improve service for residents while reducing costs. This recommendation was agreed at the meeting on 26 November 2014.
- 3.4 Section 5 details work undertaken to review parking restrictions in the borough and work that will be ongoing in 2015-16.
- 3.5 Section 6 discussed issues relating to off-street parking. It is important to try to reduce congestion caused by vehicle movements around the town centre. In sections 6.4 to 6.8, we propose work to improve parking arrangements at Millbrook car park and other car parks. The need to review signage to direct drivers to the nearest convenient car park rather than necessarily the closest to their destination is also discussed. Recommendations (2) and (3) reflect these actions. The proposal to discuss ways of improving signage was agreed by the Guildford Local Committee at its meeting on 26 November 2014.
- 3.6 In Section 6, paragraphs 6.9 to 6.23, present a review of current charges. It is important to put these in the context of charges made by neighbouring centres. Annex 6 of the Parking Business Plan presents a list of short stay charges in competing centres. In the public car parks, the recommendation is to increase charges in the long-stay car parks to encourage greater use of Park and Ride and reduce congestion at peak times particularly round the gyratory system. There is no recommendation to change the short stay parking charge. Recommendation (4) proposes increases to the long stay parking charges. Recommendation (5) proposes giving priority to residents in the town centre when there are applications for garages. This measure is designed to help reduce pressure on on-street parking by providing priority for residents living in areas with the greatest problems finding parking.
- 3.7 The financial position of the Car Park Maintenance Reserve is set out in Annex 7 of the Parking Business Plan. A review of the funding required to support the reserve is contained in paragraphs 6.24 to 6.26. The review concluded that funding for the reserve could be reduced by £125,000 per annum and this is recommendation (6) of this report.
- 3.8 Paragraphs 6.27 to 6.30 support bids for funding to replace lights in the Castle, Farnham Road and York Road Multi-Storey Car Parks with LED lights and to replace the lifts in those Car Parks. The funding for these bids from the Car Park Maintenance Reserve form recommendations (7) and (8) of this report.
- 3.9 Paragraph 33 of the Parking Business Plan highlights problems in three car parks around parks and recommendation (9) proposes that controls are introduced to help address these issues.
- 3.10 Section 7 of the Parking Business Plan considers Park and Ride and in particular the pressure on costs. Recommendation (10) proposes combining the guard for the Merrow and Artington sites and recommendation (11) proposes a

consultation on making a small charge for concessionary pass holders who qualify based on age. The Guildford Local Committee agreed these recommendations at its meeting on 26 November 2014.

- 3.11 The first call on any surplus made from on-street parking in Guildford is to pay for the established park and ride sites at Artington, Merrow, and Spectrum. The Guildford Local Committee and Guildford Borough Council Executive can determine how any remaining surplus is used within the applicable legal restrictions. Recommendation (12) proposes that the remaining surplus of £68,000 from on-street parking in Guildford in 2013-14 is used to contribute towards the cost of Onslow Park and Ride in 2015-16. The Guildford Local Committee agreed to this recommendation at its meeting on 26 November 2014.
- 3.12 We manage on-street parking in Waverley on behalf of Surrey County Council and, under the agreement, 20% of any annual surplus is for Guildford Borough Council to spend according to legal provisions which restrict its use to transport related schemes. In recommendation (12), it is proposed that the £37,750 obtained in 2013-14 from the management of parking in Waverley be used to help fund Onslow Park and Ride in 2015-16.
- 3.13 Recommendation (13) provides officers with the authority to carry out the necessary actions to make the changes agreed in the other recommendations.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The effect of recommendation (4) (a), the increase to public long-stay car parks, is estimated to increase revenue by £173,000 per annum.
- 4.2 The proposed increase in season tickets for York Road and Farnham Road Multi-Storey Car Parks by 5%, in recommendation (4) (b), is estimated to increase revenue by £34,000 per annum.
- 4.3 The effect of increasing garage rents by 5%, in recommendation (4) (c), is estimated to increase revenue by £5,800 per annum.
- 4.4 The effect of increasing contract-parking charges by 5%, in recommendation (4) (d), is estimated to increase revenue by £24,000.
- 4.5 Additional income from the above changes totalling £172,300 was included in the outline budget presented to the Executive on 25 November. Additional income of £5,100 from these changes will be included in the final draft budget, to be considered by the Executive on 20 January.
- 4.6 There is a memorandum of understanding between Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council, which allocates any surplus made from on-street parking in Guildford to fund the Artington, Merrow, and Spectrum Park and Ride sites. Any remaining funds are for the Guildford Local Committee and Guildford Borough Council to determine how to use.
- 4.7 Onslow Park and Ride was not included in this agreement because at the time of signing the costs were not known. The initial cost of running Onslow Park and

Ride was included in the Local Sustainable Transport Fund grant but this funding runs out in April 2015. The annual cost of running the buses in 2015-16 is estimated at £227,000 and the annual cost of running the site as £94,000 making a total of £321,000. The actual cost will depend on the amount of fare revenue collected and the result of the tender process for the bus contracts currently being assessed. The bus service is provided through a contract between the county council and the bus operator. Because of this, and the fact that Onslow is outside the memorandum of understanding, our estimates do not include the cost of the bus service. The running costs of the site are included as they are costs for which we are responsible.

- 4.8 This report proposes various measures to help meet the cost of Onslow Park and Ride in 2015-16. It recommends using the remaining surplus from on-street parking in Guildford in 2013-14 of £68,000 and using Guildford Borough Council's share of the surplus from on-street parking management in Waverley in 2013-14 of £37,750.
- 4.9 It recommends combining the guards at Artington and Meroo park and ride sites into a mobile guard. This measure will take some time to implement, as a new contract will have to be tendered and let but once operating, is estimated to save £30,000 per annum.
- 4.10 The report includes a recommendation to consult on introducing a charge of £1 return for concessionary pass holders who qualify for the pass based on age. If this measure was introduced it is estimated it would increase income by £130,000.
- 4.11 Even with these measures, the full estimated cost of running Onslow Park and Ride is not met. It may be necessary to use the remaining surplus from on-street parking in Guildford in 2014-15, which is estimated to be £105,000 and the money Guildford Borough Council receives from on-street parking management in Waverley in 2014-15, estimated to be £30,000, to cover any gap. It would be for the Guildford Local Committee and Guildford Borough Council to decide how the remaining surplus from on-street parking in Guildford could be spent. Guildford Borough Council can determine how the money it receives from on-street parking in Waverley is spent. Using these funds would only provide funding for 2015-16 and alternative funding would be required going forward.
- 4.12 The business plan also recommends reducing the annual revenue contribution to the Car Park Maintenance Reserve by £125,000 from April 2015. This reduction was not included in the outline budget and will be incorporated when the final draft budget is considered by the Executive on 20 January.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications from the recommendations in the report.

6. Human Resource Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct Human Resource implications from the recommendations in this report.

7. Key Risks

- 7.1 The income from off-street parking is significant and variations of 1% can make £100,000 difference to the out-turn. Many factors in estimating income are outside the Council's control and other changes can affect the out-turn after budgets have been set. We therefore monitor car park income carefully to ensure we are aware of trends and can respond if there is a significant variance to estimate.
- 7.2 Park and Ride forms a key part of both Councils' vision for addressing congestion and promoting sustainable travel options. Funding needs to be identified to meet the costs of both existing and new sites so that this vision can be realised.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The Parking Business Plan has been written in consultation with officers from Surrey County Council. The Guildford Local Committee considered the Parking Business Plan on 26 November. The recommendations for the Guildford Local Committee were agreed. There was also a question raised as to whether there were plans to build on the surface car parks in the town centre, making more multi-storey or underground parking and freeing space for development. The parking strategy will address this, but it is recognised that surface parking in the town centre is an inefficient use of space. We also want to look to develop parking at points where traffic is intercepted before it reaches the most congested parts of the town so that congestion is reduced.

9. Views of the Customer and Community Scrutiny Committee

- 9.1 The Scrutiny Committee is meeting on 13 January after the agenda for the Executive meeting is published. We will send a note of the issues and comments raised by the Committee to all councillors before the Executive meeting.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 Parking is a vital service, supporting business by providing access to the town, but too many cars add to congestion, which is a major problem for Guildford. There are plans for the town to expand and this increases demand for access. Encouraging greater use of sustainable modes of transport is important and interventions using parking tariffs, communications and signage to influence people's behaviour can help reduce congestion. However, it is important not to look at parking in isolation and measures being developed to make other modes of transport more attractive are part of the solution to encourage mode shift. The Parking Strategy, which will be developed jointly with Surrey County Council and

other partners, will set out the part that parking interventions can play in supporting the Council's objectives.

11. Background Papers

None

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – The Parking Business Plan 2015-16